

SYNERGISTIC IMPROVEMENTS TO POLYNUCLEOTIDE VACCINES

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

The invention features a polynucleotide vaccine modified to enhance expression of the encoded antigen in host cells. The polynucleotide vaccine comprises an antigen-encoding nucleic acid sequence derived from a non-host species of a first phylum or first kingdom, wherein the native signal sequence of the antigen coding sequence is deleted and, optionally, replaced with a signal sequence of a polypeptide of a second phylum or a second kingdom that is functional in the host to be immunized (*e.g.*, a viral signal sequence with a plant antigen-encoding sequence). In one embodiment, the signal sequence is a hemagglutinin A (HA) signal sequence, and the antigen is an allergen (*e.g.*, plant allergen) or from a pathogen (*e.g.*, a bacterium, virus or parasite). The polynucleotide vaccine of the invention provides a synergistic effect with an immunostimulatory sequence (ISS) adjuvant to not only maintain, but to enhance, the immune response to the encoded antigen.

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